

Message Text

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ACTION INT-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-06 SSO-00 NASA-02

AID-05 /039 W

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O 301040Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5586

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 1062

PARIS FOR SCICOUNS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN MR US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY SCIENTIST MAURICE
GROLIER

REF: STATE 103835

1. BELIEVE WE CAN PROBABLY OBTAIN GIRM CLEARANCE FOR PROPOSED
RESEARCH VISIT AND AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE IN ABOUT WEEK'S TIME.
FORESEE NO RPT NO DIFFICULTY IN CHARTERING PLANE
DURING TIMEFRAME DESIRED. COST PER HOUR FLYING TIME FOR
5-PASSENGER PLANE (SMALLEST AVAILABLE) IS \$325.00. IF PLANE
OVERNIGHTS OUTSIDE NOUAKCHOTT, CUSTOMER MUST PAY HOTEL BILL AND
MEAL EXPENSES FOR PILOT. IF PLANE IS ON GROUND ALL DAY OUTSIDE
NOUAKCHOTT, THERE WILL BE MINIMUM CHARGE OF ABOUT \$700.

2. WE WISH TO POINT OUT THAT THERE HAS BEEN SHARP INCREASE
IN MILITARY ACTIVITY IN PAST 2-3 WEEKS IN
CERTAIN PARTS OF NORTHERN MAURITANIA, INCLUDING AREA BETWEEN
FORT GOURAND (F'DERICK) AND ATAR. (SEE NOUAKCHOTT 1041--COPY
SENT PARIS--FOR MOST RECENT REPORT). SO LONG AS SAHARA FIGHTING
CONTINUES, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE INADVISABLE TO FLY SMALL PLANE,
PARTICULARLY AT LOW ALTITUDE, ANYWHERE IN AREA AROUND FORT
GOURAND OR FROM THERE SOUTH ALONG 13 DEGREE MERIDIAN TO ATAR. WE
FORESEE NO DIFFICULTY IN FLYING FROM ATAR TO TIDJIKDJA OR FROM
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ATAR TO ANY POINT SOUTH OF ATAR.

3. IF DESPITE ELMINIATION OF FORT GOURAND-ATAR PORTION OF TRIP, GROLIER BELIEVES OBJECTIVES OF VISIT CAN STILL BE LARGELY ACHIEVED, WE RECOMMEND HE HOLD FAST IN PARIS UNTIL WE HAVE OBTAINED GIRM CLEARANCE. IN MEANTIME, GROLIER MAY WISH TO MAKE AIRLINE RESERVATIONS FOR ARRIVAL NOUAKCHOTT APPROX. MAY 8-10.

4. PLEASE CARIFY STATEMENT THAT RECONNAISSANCE WILL TAKE ABOUT TWO WEEKS. DOES THIS MEAN PLANE WILL BE IN USE FOR TWO WEEKS? IF SO, WHERE DOES GROLIER PROPOSE TO OPERATE OUT OF AND WHERE WILL PLANE OVERNIGHT?HANDYSIDE

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